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JFK ASSASSINATION SYSTEM

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trouble come see you?

Mr. Houston. Oh, no, there's a number of times. For instance, I think it was back in the '50's, there's a lot of them, but a couple might illustrate -- in those days we were doing a good deal of political action abroad in the sense of giving guidance to factions in foreign countries that U.S. policy favored in organizing elections. I don't mean in rigging them, but how to get down to the grass roots, the old-fashioned political advice on how to run a political campaign.

We didn't have many trained officers on this. We had one or two who were excellent and they wanted more, and they came to me with the proposition that -- this was an election year, which one I have forgotten -- that we put officers in both the Republican and Democratic campaign parties to get the practical experience, and I advised -- actually, I went over and talked with Malcolm Wilkie, who was then the legal counsel in the Department of Justice, and this was most ill-advisable, and I went back and they dropped the project.

More recently, our communication fellows down in Virginia found they could easily monitor long distance telephone conversations from Latin American to Canada, and in some cases to New York, and these frequently carried conversations involving narcotics in great detail. They had no telephone discipline at all, security discipline on the telephone. And they would even give the name of the person who's going to

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receive the narcotics and where.

However, this immediately got us into an internal security and a police function. I told them they had to drop it, and they did. And it's too bad, because nobody else has found a way of doing it, and this information is floating over our heads right now and we cannot use it.

Mr. Schwarz. Have there been any instances where you or your office advised the Agency that it should not do something when nevertheless the Agency went ahead and did it?

Mr. Houston. I should think I would remember an occasion like that, but I don't.

Senator Mondale. Thank you.

(Senator Mondale left the hearing room.)

Mr. Schwarz. Mr. Houston, with the Senator absent, you don't have to go ahead.

Mr. Houston. Fine, fine.

Mr. Schwarz. I'm going to go on to another subject. Does anyone else have anything else about the Robert Kennedy meeting?

Mr. Kirbow. I have only one other question, and perhaps more about the leadership of the Agency.

Mr. Houston, your reputation over the some twenty-six twenty-eight years you were General Counsel was one of intense loyalty to the Director and the Deputy Director of the Agency.

Mr. Houston. That is correct.

chest operator, but so far as I know he always operated in the line of command, and something like this I think I should have been consulted, but I can understand the operator's viewpoint. They might have felt there were reasons why I should not be consulted.

But just what went on in the line of command between Harvey and the Director I just cannot fathom this.

Mr. Schwarz. Harvey worked for Helms at the time, did he not?

Mr. Houston. That's right.

Mr. Schwarz. And what was the nature of their relationship as you understood it?

Mr. Houston. They were not too compatible as people, but I have never known that there was any difficulty in complying with the chain of command. I wouldn't necessarily have known if there had been, but I didn't know it.

Mr. Wides. And Harvey had worked for Mr. Helms in Berlin?

Mr. Houston. He had been Chief of Station in Berlin, he had been Chief of Station in Rome, and I think it was after the Rome assignment he came back and took over the staff.

Mr. Wides. But in connection with some of the operations like the Berlin Tunnel and other intelligence operations he had a pretty close-working relationship with Mr. Helms?

Mr. Houston. They were all in the DDP and certainly anything of the importance of the Berlin Tunnel, they would be

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could you think of anything which would be of benefit to this Committee that we have not inquired into?

Mr. Houston. The only thing I thought you might ask that -- I thought you were going to mention it -- somewhere, and this is very vague in my mind, both where I heard it, in what context, and what the timing of the event was, but I have heard and I am sure you must have heard of the delivery of a sniper's rifle to the Embassy in Havanna, which may have been intended for some sort of assassination attempt.

Mr. Schwarz. The Embassy when we still had an Embassy there?

Mr. Houston. It was apparently when we still had the Embassy.

Mr. Kirbow. Was this a couched delivery, covert delivery, much like the later deliveries into the Dominican Republic?

Mr. Houston. I think so.

I don't know much about it. I just, through a vague recollection, I don't know any details or any specifics, it's one of the things you pick up.

Mr. Kirbow. When would that have been? I am trying to date when we no longer had an Embassy there.

Mr. Wides. Mr. Noll, I think Mr. Noll was the Station Chief, Jim Noll, and I believe he left in late 1959.

Mr. Kirbow. Was that about the correct time?